

I was bothe anguissous and trouble
for the peril that I saw double;
I niste what to seye or do,
Ne gete a leche my woundis to;
for neithir thurgh gras ne rote,
Ne hadde I help of hope ne bote.
But to the botoun evermo
Myn herte drew; for al my wo,
My thought was in non other thing,
for hadde it been in my keping,
It wolde have brought my lyf agayn.
for certainly, I dar wel seyn,
The sight only, and the savour,
Hlegged muche of my langour.

Simplese

THAN gan I for to drawe me
Toward the botoun fair to see;
And Love hadde gete him, in a
throwe,
Another arowe into his bowe,
And for to shete gan him dresse;
The arowis name was Simplese.
And whan that Love gan nyghe me nere,
He drew it up, withouten were,
And shet at me with al his might,
So that this arowe anon right
Thourghout myn eigh, as it was founde,
Into myn herte hath maad a wounde.
Thanne I anon dide al my crafte
for to drawen out the shafte,
And therwithal I sighed eft.
But in myn herte the heed was left,
Which ay encesid my desyre,
Unto the botoun drawe nere;
And ever, mo that me was wo,
The more desyr hadde I to go
Unto the roser, where that grew
The fresshe botoun so bright of hewe.
Betir me were have leten be;
But it bihoved nedes me
To don right as myn herte bad.
for ever the body must be lad
Aftir the herte; in wele and wo,
Of force togidre they must go.
But never this archer wolde fyne
To shete at me with alle his pyne,
And for to make me to him mete.

Curtesye

HE thriddre arowe he gan to shete,
Whan best his tyme he mighte
espye,
The which was named Curtesye;
Into myn herte it dide avale.
Aswone I fel, bothe deed and pale;
Long tyme I lay, and stired nought,
Til I abraid out of my thought.
And faste than I layssed me
To drawen out the shafte of tree;
But ever the heed was left bihinde
for ought I couthe pulle or winde.
So sore it stikid whan I was hit,
That by no craft I might it flit;
But anguissous and ful of thought,
I felte such wo, my wounde ay wrought,
That somoned me alway to go

Toward the rose, that plesed me so;
But I ne durste in no manere,
Bicause the archer was so nere,
for evermore gladly, as I rede,
Brent child of fyr hath muche drede.
And, certis yit, for al my peyne,
Though that I sigh yit arwis reyne,
And grounde quarels sharpe of stele,
Ne for no payne that I might fele,
Yit might I not mysilf withholde
The faire roser to biholde;
for Love me yaf sich hardement
for to fulfille his comaundement.

AND my feet I roos up than
feble, as a forwoundid man;
And forth to gon my might I sette,
And for the archer nolde I lette.
Toward the roser fast I drow;
But thornes sharpe mo than ynow
Ther were, and also thistels thikke,
And breres, brimme for to prikke,
That I ne mighte gete grace
The rowe thornes for to passe,
To sene the roses fresshe of hewe.
I must abide, though it me rewe,
The hegge aboute so thikke was,
That closid the roses in compas.
But o thing lyked me right wele;
I was so nygh, I mighte fele
Of the botoun the swote odour,
And also see the fresshe colour;
And that right gretly lyked me,
That I so neer it mighte see.
Sich joye anon therof hadde I,
That I forgat my malady.
To sene it hadde I sich delyt,
Of sorwe and angre I was al quit,
And of my woundes that I had thar;
for nothing lyken me might mar
Than dwellen by the roser ay,
And thennes never to passe away.

AT whan a whyle I had be thar,
The God of Love, which al toshar
Myn herte with his arwis kene,
Caste him to yewe me woundis
grene.
He shet at me ful hastily
An arowe named Company,
The whiche takel is ful able
To make these ladies merciable.
Than I anon gan chaungen hewe
for grevaunce of my wounde newe,
That I agayn fel in swoning,
And sighed sore in compleynnyng.
Sore I compleyned that my sore
On me gan greven more and more.
I had non hope of allegeaunce;
So nigh I drow to desperaunce,
I rought of dethe ne of lyf,
Whithir that love wolde me dryf.
If me a martir wolde he make,
I might his power nought forsake.
And whyt for anger thus I wook,

HE God of Love an arowe took;
ful sharp it was and ful pugnaunt,
And it was callid fair Semblaunt,
The which in no wys wol consente,
That any lover him repente
To serve his love with herte and alle,
for any peril that may bifalle.

But though this arowe was kene grounde
As any rasour that is founde,
To cutte and kerve, at the poynt,
The God of Love it hadde anynt
With a precious oynement,
Somdel to yewe aleggement
Upon the woundes that he had
Thourgh the body in my herte maad,
To helpe hir sores, and to cure,
And that they may the bet endure.
But yit this arowe, withoute more,
Made in myn herte a large sore,
That in ful gret peyne I abood.
But ay the oynement wente abroad;
Thourghout my woundes large and wyde
It spreade aboute in every syde;
Thourgh whos vertu and whos might
Myn herte joyful was and light.
But for the precious oynement,
The shaft I drow out of the arowe,
Roking for wo right wondir narwe;
But the heed, which made me smerte,
Lette bihinde in myn herte
With other foure, I dar wel say,
That never wol be take away;
But the oynement halp me wele.
And yit sich sorwe dide I fele,
Of my woundes fresshe and newe,
That alday I chaunged hewe,
As men might see in my visage.
The arwis were so fulle of rage,
So variaunt of diversitee,
That men in everich mighte see
Bothe gret anoy and eek swetnesse,
And joye meynt with bittirnesse.
Now were they esy, now were they wood,
In hem I felte bothe harm and good;
Now sore without aleggement,
Now softening with oynement;
It softned here, and prikked there,
Thus ese and anger togidre were.

HE God of Love deliverly
Com lepard to me hastily,
And seide to me, in gret rape:
Yeld thee, for thou may not escape!
May no defence availle thee heere;
Therefore I rede mak no daungere.
If thou wolt yelde thee hastily,
Thou shalt the rather have mercy.
He is a fool in sikernesse,
That with daunger or stoutnesse
Rebellith ther that he shulde plesse;
In such folye is lital ese.
Be meek, wher thou must nedis bowe;
To stryve agayn is nought thy prowte.

Come at ones, and have ydo,
for I wol that it be so.
Than yeld thee here debonairly.

AND I answerid ful humbly:
Gladly, sir; at your bidding,
I wol me yelde in alle thing.
To your servyse I wol me take;
for God defende that I shulde make
Ageyn your bidding resistance;
I wol not doon so gret offence;
for if I dide, it were no skile.
Ye may do with me what ye wile,
Save or spille, and also sloo;
fro you in no wyse may I go.
My lyf, my deth, is in your honde,
I may not laste out of your bonde.
Pleyn at your list I yelde me,
hoping in herte, that sumtyme ye
Comfort and ese shulle me sende;
Or ellis shortly, this is the ende,
Withouten helthe I moot ay dure,
But if ye take me to your cure.
Comfort or helthe how shuld I have,
Sith ye me hurte, but ye me save?
The helthe of lovers moot be founde
Wheras they token firste hir wounde.
And if ye list of me to make
Your prisoner, I wol it take
Of herte and wil, fully at gree.
Hoolly and pleyn I yelde me,
Withoute feynyng or feyntyse,
To be governed by your emprise.
Of you I here so much prys,
I wol ben hool at your deys
for to fulfille your tyking
And repente for nothing,
hoping to have yit in som tyde
Mercy, of that that I abyde.

And with that covenaut yeld I me,
ANOON doun kneling upon my knee,
Profering for to kisse his feet;
But for nothing he wolde me lete,
And seide: I love thee bothe and preyse,
Sen that thyn answer doth me ese,
for thou answerid so curteisly.
for now I wot wel uttirly,
That thou art gentil, by thy speche.
for though a man fer wolde seche,
He shulde not finden, in certeyn,
No sich answer of no vileyn;
for sich a word ne mighte nought
Isse out of a vilayns thought.
Thou shalt not lesen of thy speche,
for to thy helping wol I eche,
And eek encesen that I may.
But first I wol that thou obay
fully, for thyn avauntage,
Anon to do me here homage.
And sithen kisse thou shalt my mouth,
Which to no vilayn was never couth
for to aproche it, ne for to touche;
for sauf of cherlis I ne vouche
That they shulle never neigh it nere.